DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 329 376 RC 017 390

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TITLE Practitioners' Views of Indian Education in New Mexico: We Seek Harmony.
INSTITUTION New Mexico State Dept. of Education, Santa Fe. Div. of Indian Education.; New Mexico Univ., Albuquerque.
PUB DATE Jun 89
NOTE 53p.; Some pages contain light, broken type which may not reproduce well.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Administrator Attitudes; *American Indian Education; American Indians; *Cultural Differences; Educational Attitudes; Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; *Learning Problems; Minority Group Teachers; Surveys; *Teacher Attitudes; Workshops
IDENTIFIERS Native Americans; *New Mexico

ABSTRACT

This booklet examines barriers to academic success for Native American students. The 32 practitioners attending a workshop at the 1989 Annual Conference of the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education completed a survey that assessed the extent to which 31 possible barriers interfered with Native American education in their schools. Workshop participants, of whom 25 were Native Americans, then worked as a group to identify and discuss the most important barriers. Analysis of the survey results and workshop discussions revealed a complex interlocking pattern of barriers. Six themes stood out: (1) cultural differences between Native American students and their teachers; (2) educators' lack of sensitivity to cultural differences and inadequate preparation for working in this context; (3) mismatch between Native American students' learning styles and teachers' daily routines and teaching methods; (4) low student self-esteem and high student absenteeism; (5) racial prejudice toward Native Americans and low expectations of Native American students; and (6) lack of input by Native American teachers on educational matters and lack of research on Native American education. These six themes constitute an indictment of Native American education in New Mexico. Improvement requires a cooperative approach that focuses on the involvement and input of Native American educators, students, parents, and tribal leaders. Appendices contain the survey instrument and a list of respondent characteristics. (SV)

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PRACTITIONERS' VIEWS OF INDIAN EDUCATION IN NEW MEXICO

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We Seek Harmony

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The Balance of Life

the power of the universe
provides the sun.
the sun brings life - the source
of our being.
to the four directions
we seek harmony,
a balance of life.
our migrations to the four
directions
take us to the center of our
being.
along our journey we meet
the creations.
we are in harmony.

Dallas

PRACTITIONERS' VIEWS OF

INDIAN EDUCATION IN NEW MEXICO:

We Seek Harmony

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A Publication of the
NEW MEXICO
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INDIAN EDUCATION UNIT
and
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
PROJECT L.E.A.D.
and
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER
DESEGREGATION ASSISTANCE CENTER -
SOUTH CENTRAL COLLABORATIVE
June 1989

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HOW THIS BOOKLET WAS PREPARED

This booklet is a beginning effort to give voice to the views of educators who work day to day with Native American students in New Mexico schools. Most of the educators who speak here are themselves Native Americans; most have had many years of professional experience; and most are saying that we all need to know more about what gets in the way of academic success for Native American students. They also suggest where to start looking for answers.

The first part of this booklet reports the results of a survey developed by Bonnie Page and C. David Beers for use in a workshop titled "Teachers' Perspectives about Native American Students," presented at the 1989 Annual Conference of the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education (NMABE). The survey questionnaire listed 31 possible barriers to the academic success of Native American students and asked each respondent to indicate the extent to which each barrier operates in his/her school.

Thirty-two persons responded to this survey in the initial workshop; twenty-five are Native Americans. The workshop participants themselves, working as a group, began the process of identifying the most important factors that act as barriers to the

academic success of Native American students; and many of them wrote about the "single most important barrier" based on their individual experiences.

The findings from this initial study indicate that many factors are operating simultaneously to create barriers to the academic performance of Native American students in New Mexico schools. Virtually all of the 31 factors listed on the survey questionnaire were felt by many respondents to be operating to a great extent or a moderate extent in their own schools. The people with day-to-day responsibilities for delivery of services in the schools do see a complicated, interlocking series of barriers; and this finding suggests that there is no single "magic silver arrow" that can do much toward solving the present, real problems. Yet, the findings also indicate that practitioners do not feel paralyzed by the complexity, as there is a strong pattern of agreement about the importance of the following points.

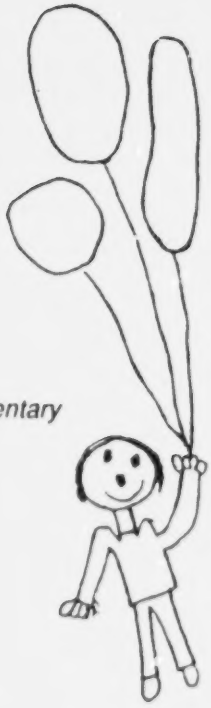
First, Native American students are culturally different. They often have language differences, as well as other differences that affect academic performance. Second, most educators do not have sufficient information about these cultural differences. They are not well prepared when they enter the field and they do not have

enough knowledge of Native American cultures, values, and life styles. Third, teaching methods and daily routines often do not match students' skills, abilities, or learning patterns. Fourth, some Native American students demonstrate low self-esteem and may exhibit low expectations for their own success within the walls of the formal classroom. Fifth, there is prejudice against Native American students on the part of some educators; and many have low expectations for Native American student performance. Sixth, Native American teachers and aides do not have enough say in educational matters and there is not enough research on Native American education.

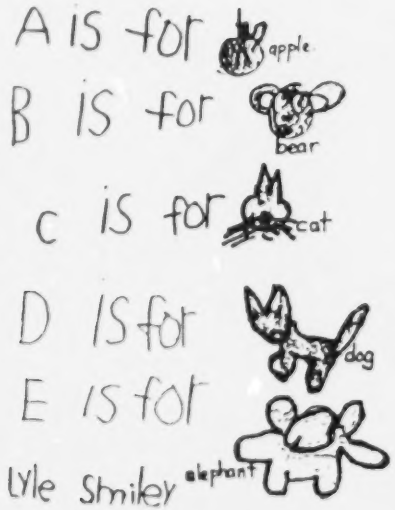
These six main themes have been derived from an analysis of all the data provided by participants in the workshop, the 32 individual responses to the survey questionnaire, and the group discussions and individual writings about the single most important barrier. There is a kind of "story" or message in the pattern of responses that was not present in the original "laundry list" of 31 possible barriers to the academic success of Native American students. This "story" suggests that there are, in fact, important differences in what children bring to school, and that ignorance of these differences produces teaching methods that do not match who the students are. This

incompatibility between student characteristics and school characteristics produces an interlocking cycle of low self-esteem on the part of students and prejudice and low expectations on the part of educators. The responses from the workshop also suggest a solution: Native Americans themselves are part of an educational system that they had very little part in creating. More research in Native American education is necessary, and Native American people must have a part in this process. More is known about how to work effectively with Native American students than the profession at large now recognizes. Native American educators have valuable knowledge, and need the opportunity to develop and disseminate it.

This study may encourage more Native American educators to make their voices heard and will provide the opportunity for educators to listen. And so, we ask you, the reader, to join us as we deal in more detail with these six major points in the rest of this booklet. Most of all, we ask you to become part of this dialogue, this search for harmony, in the State of New Mexico.

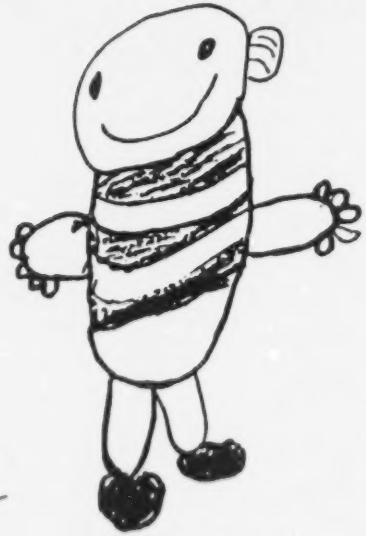


Brandy McDaniel
Second Grade
Ruth N. Bond Elementary



Lyle Smiley
Kindergarten
Nizhoni Elementary

I Can See by Manuelito Begaye



a key

I Can See

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I Can See

me

Manuelito Begaye
Kindergarten
Nizhoni Elementary

SIX THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE 1989 NEW MEXICO BILINGUAL CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

In this section of the booklet, we will look in more detail at what happened in our workshop session held as part of the state bilingual conference in April, 1989, in Albuquerque. We want to describe the procedures we used, and to emphasize how modest this pilot study really is. The basic framework for the workshop was provided by the survey questionnaire, which began with these words:

> The following factors have been identified as possible barriers to the academic success of Native American students. Please indicate below the extent to which you feel these barriers exist in your school. We assume that some of these factors may not be present in your school; but please be frank in your responses, as this information will be utilized by the State Department of Education and the Northern New Mexico Network for Rural Education. These data will help educators make decisions regarding Indian education.

Following this introduction was a list of 31 possible barriers to the

academic success of Native American students, each with the following response categories: "Great Extent - Moderate Extent - Limited Extent - Not at All - Don't Know." (See Appendix 1 for a copy of the complete questionnaire and the summary of responses to each item.)

In the workshop we began with a review of some recent statewide test scores to provide a common information base from which to look at the underlying assumption of the questionnaire: There must be barriers in New Mexico schools to the academic success of Native Americans; otherwise, the statewide statistics would not be so gloomy. We wanted to orient the workshop participants to a statewide perspective and then encourage them to use their own personal experiences to provide more detail.

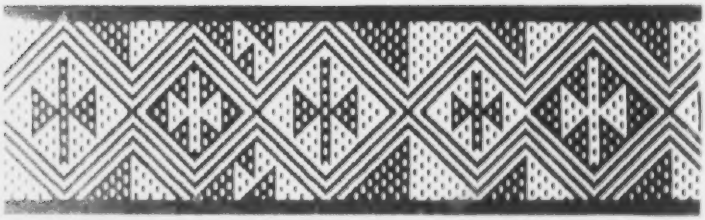
After the 35 to 40 people in the workshop had completed the questionnaire, we began an informal analysis of the results with the group by asking each respondent to identify the single most important barrier in his/her own view. We were then able to isolate the five barriers having the most nominations as single most important. This activity led into talking about the questionnaire as a group and, subsequently, identifying items for further discussion in small groups. In these small groups, we asked people to talk and write about

the most important barrier(s) based on their own personal experiences. Selections of the participants' writing are presented, along with the pattern of responses to the questionnaire.

Thirty-two participants filled out questionnaires, and many submitted writings. Those who signed an optional attendance sheet are listed in the acknowledgements; some chose not to be identified; and others came for only part of the workshop. Twenty-five of the thirty-two participants are Native Americans; most have been working in schools serving Native American populations for several years; and all are concerned about the barriers to the academic success of Native American students in New Mexico.

THEME ONE:

Native American Students Are Culturally Different



THEME ONE: NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS ARE CULTURALLY DIFFERENT FROM THEIR EDUCATORS.

This point may seem painfully obvious to some; but the pattern of responses to this questionnaire indicates that it is fundamental, for it underlies nearly all the barriers to Indian students' academic success identified in most respondents' schools. Many participants felt that "Native American students have language differences that offset academic performance" (Question #25). One wrote: "The lack of the English language is the main barrier to the process of education of Native American students. If the students do not have the language, they cannot perform in any of the academic subjects. If they don't speak English, how can they read it or write it or take a test in it?"

Many respondents also indicated that "Native American students have family and home problems which affect academic performance" (Question #26). One asked: "But how do we get Indian parents involved? At our school we set up a parent workshop for one day, and only four parents attended. We had that workshop in the tribal community center, but most did not make the effort to come." Another wrote: "An important barrier is the lack of parent participation. Teachers need

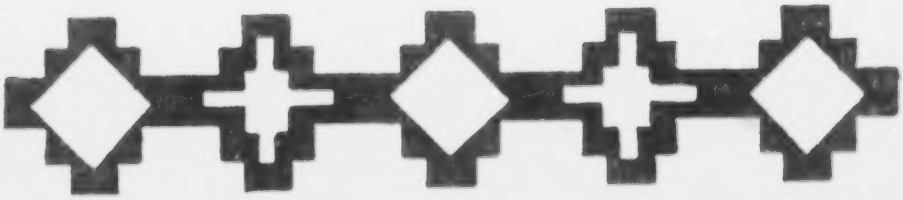
to go to the parents--to make home visits."

This issue of cultural differences is perhaps the heart of the problem, and we cannot expect Native American children and mainstream adult teachers to establish a mutually respectful two-way flow of information and influence when the adult carriers of the different cultures have so much trouble connecting. Teachers feel frustrated when they extend an invitation and parents do not respond; but how often do teachers go to the parents on home visits? Lines of communication need to be opened so that parents feel welcome in their children's schools and teachers feel welcome in their students' homes.

Sonya Duncan
First Grade
Nataani Nez Elementary

THEME TWO:

Most Educators Do Not Have Sufficient Information About These Cultural Differences



THEME TWO: EDUCATORS DO NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION ABOUT NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE AND VALUES AND ARE NOT WELL PREPARED TO WORK IN THIS CONTEXT.

When we look at the data from the survey questionnaire to determine which of the possible barriers were operating to a great extent, we found this one at the top: "The teachers do not have enough information about Native American cultures, values, and lifestyles" (Question #8). This item also was identified in the workshop as the single most important barrier by many of the participants. One of the people wrote: "Teachers, at several of the schools I tutor in, appear to expect Indian students who have the stereotypical quiet, shy, outward profile to eventually fail or to do poorly. I would like to think that rather than label these teachers as 'prejudiced,' they were simply without enough information concerning the Indian culture, values, and lifestyles and, therefore, misinterpreted what they were seeing."

Another wrote: "Educators who teach Native American students need to become sensitive to the traditions and culture of the students." A third stated: "Urban teachers need much more cultural, values, and lifestyle education, as well as more education in the dynamics of prejudice."

However, just having information may not be enough. Another respondent wrote: "My biggest pet peeve is the unpreparedness of teachers. In our Native American program, the instructional model calls for prep times where resource teachers and regular classroom teachers are supposed to sit down and plan for the incorporation of culturally-relevant lessons based on the lesson plans that teachers develop. Ninety-nine percent of the time, the Native American resource teachers are prepared and willing to plug in lessons, to plan, to be cooperative in any way possible. However, teachers are usually ill prepared. Many don't have a single scratch in their lesson plan books. I wonder, do they have it in their minds, do they have it elsewhere on a sheet of paper, or do they even care? Does the principal care enough to see whether teaching is going on in his or her school?"

Another person wrote: "It seems to me that these non-Indian teachers did not take the time to learn about the culture, lifestyles, language, and values of the tribe before coming to teach. The unwillingness to learn about the culture makes teaching Native American students hard because the teacher does not know who this child is, where he comes from, and, finally, what he is like at home and in the classroom."

Another item on the survey questionnaire which many respondents felt was a barrier in their schools was, "Teachers are not well prepared when they enter the field" (Question #9).

Other workshop participants pointed out that it might not just be teachers who need to reorient their thinking concerning the needs of Native American students. One wrote: "It is my opinion that our district needs to be more responsive to the Indian students' needs. 1.) Teachers and administrators need culturally-relevant courses at the college level. 2.) Parents and community members need to stress education. 3.) Students should be taught at an early age to form positive images about education and academics."

Another writer summed up this important point in the following words: "I see the need for more cultural values information for teachers. Indian culture is not beads and feathers, but a belief system. We must integrate the lifestyles and values of the dominant society with those of other cultures in a positive way."

THEME THREE:

Teaching Methods and Daily Routines Do Not Match Student Skills, Abilities, and Learning Patterns

THEME THREE: TEACHING METHODS AND DAILY ROUTINES AND SCHEDULES DO NOT MATCH NATIVE AMERICAN LEARNING STYLES.

The end result of the lack of information on the part of teachers working with Native American students is that "The teaching methods do not match student skills or abilities" (Question #4), and "The daily routine and schedules of the school do not match students' learning patterns" (Question #5). Both these factors were seen by many as operating as barriers in their schools. One person wrote: "Most classroom teachers use just one teaching style and expect all children to adjust to the ways of the school." Another person offered a specific example of the mismatch between what the school expects and what Native American traditions for learning support: "Schools still encourage competition and individual work ('do your own work'); while Native American children come from cultures in which cooperation is stressed. Most importantly, the ability to work with others is becoming increasingly important in our society." This is a point that has been made publicly by many business people as well, who say that schools stress individual achievement while the work place generally requires people to work effectively as members of a team. Native American traditions may have something to contribute to

our economic competitiveness in the world marketplace, and provide a way in which America can maximize the value of its pluralistic setting within the international community.

Other workshop participants had some advice for teachers: "Native American materials are not readily accessible to the children in most classrooms. Suggestion: Each class might have a mini-library of Native American materials. If the teacher is creative, lessons can be built around stories in all the content areas." This is another example of a way in which a Native American tradition--storytelling--might be of value to our society. Throughout human history, most important information has been transmitted through stories. American educators could adapt the story-telling tradition of Native Americans to teaching students in the classroom and to addressing the fact that teachers in Native American classrooms do not understand Native American culture, values, and lifestyles. One source of information regarding the ways in which Native American educators conduct classroom activities for Native American students can be found in the Head Start program. One of the requirements for receiving a Child Development Associate (CDA) degree is that the classroom teachers write short books that describe what they do in the classroom and how they do it.

When Native American Head Start teachers have been encouraged to draw on their own storytelling traditions, their portfolio writing has produced useful and powerful information about how Native Americans conduct themselves as teachers. (See "Storytelling and Native American CDA's" by C. David Beers in Children Today, March-April 1989.)

Cultural differences are sometimes perceived as barriers to the success of Native American students, and the stories of Native American educators will be useful in pointing out how these differences operate in the classroom. Another writer in the workshop pointed out the implication of cultural differences: "Treat the child as an individual. Give the child a chance to prove him/herself. Lesson plans should be developed according to each student's needs. Don't use the same plan for everyone." This is sound advice to teachers, addressing not only cultural differences, but individual differences. To the extent that teaching is an art, rather than a science, each human being is unique, no matter what his or her cultural background.

THEME FOUR:

Some Native American Students Demonstrate Low Self-Esteem Within the Walls of the Classroom and Have a High Rate of Absenteeism

THEME FOUR: SOME NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE LOW SELF-ESTEEM WITHIN THE WALLS OF THE CLASSROOM AND THERE IS A HIGH RATE OF ABSENTEEISM.

Two items identified by many respondents as barriers address the issue of student self-esteem. These read: "There is a low expectation for Native American student performance by the students themselves" (Question #12), and "Native American students have very low self-esteem" (Question #27). One person who looked at the fact that teaching methods and daily routines and schedules do not match Native American learning styles went on to describe one of the results of this mismatch: "So, the children learn to tell on each other, to look out for themselves only, and to let others struggle without even trying to help. At the end of all this, they come out lonely and isolated if they stay in school. (Could this be a big reason for early dropouts?)"

Another factor that was seen as a great barrier to success was: "There is a high absentee rate for Native American students" (Question #13). Since cooperation is such an important part of Native American tradition, and it plays so small a part in the daily routine of most schools, it is easy to see where the low self-esteem comes from. It is important to remember that we are dealing with two different lifeways, one manifested by an adult

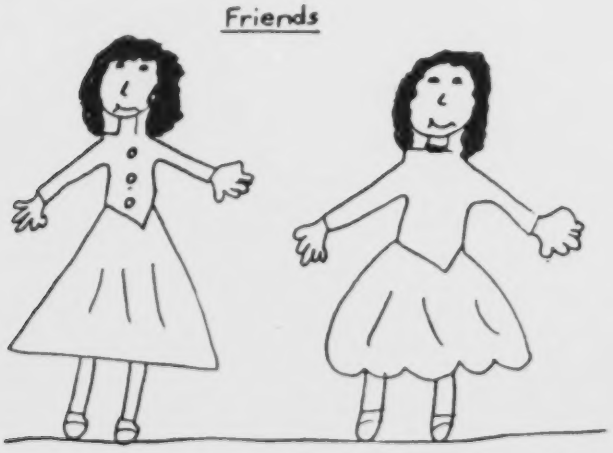
member of one culture and the other by a child member of another culture. And, where there is competition between adult and child, child development specialists tell us that the child's most usual reaction is to blame himself or herself for failures that may be those of the adult and/or the school system.

Some problems are essentially logistic in nature, as this participant stated: "Native American students are bussed in from rural communities to attend public schools. Many times the busses are delayed due to inclement weather conditions, which in turn causes the students to be late to classes or causes them to miss school activities altogether." Perhaps the virtues of large, consolidated schools have been oversold, especially as they apply to Native American education. If Native Americans live in isolated but close-knit communities, perhaps programs that serve such communities, like Head Start, can provide a structure that will allow more alignment of Native American traditions with school demands.

Another participant in the workshop wrote: "High absenteeism is a serious problem. The school fails to follow up on truancy. Students are not supposed to miss more than ten days in one semester; but yet we see them passed on to the next grade."

One woman in the workshop illustrated the problem of low self-esteem with this poignant story about a student in her class: "When I scolded him one day for not having what he needed to do his work, he went back to his desk, borrowed paper and pen, and wrote an extensive letter to me in which he said he did not understand his own failure, that trying to put knowledge in his head was equal to 'making his head explode.'"

Another story told of a student who tried very hard in class, but, despite this, was not succeeding: "Her spirit is willing; her ability is weak. She asks me, 'Why do you think we Indians fail so often?' And to this question, I have no satisfactory answer."



Sunshine Touchin
First Grade
Kirtland Elementary

THEME FIVE:

Native American Students Sometimes Experience Prejudice and Some Educators Have Low Expectations for Native American Student Performance

THEME FIVE: EDUCATORS HAVE PREJUDICES AGAINST NATIVE AMERICANS AND LOW EXPECTATIONS OF NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS.

Although this is a topic of discussion frequently avoided, participants in the workshop recognized as a significant issue that "There is prejudice/bias against Native American students on the part of some educators" (Question #17). One person wrote: "There exists the attitude that Native Americans are plagued with problems--at home, at school, etc. The orientation of staff at this school proceeds from this problem approach. For example, a drug abuse program was conducted at our school, and only Native American elementary-age children were invited to attend the assembly. This pattern of 'separatism' reinforces the negative perceptions that many educators have of Native American students."

Another wrote: "Teachers stereotype kids. They say things about the problems Indian children have in English; they have no concept of time; Indian kids can't do the work; they have to be led by the hand." Would it be fair to ask how many teachers have problems in Native American languages such as Navajo, or Jicarilla Apache, or Tewa?

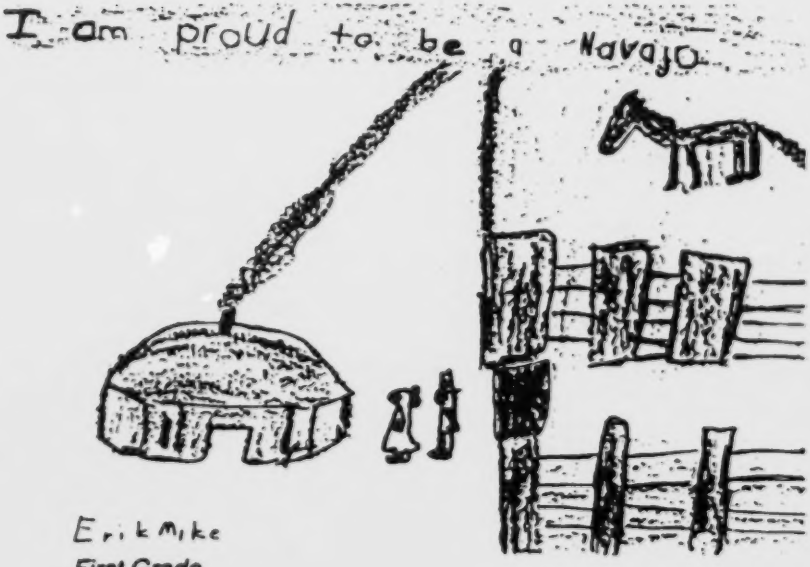
Another person wrote about these barriers in their school: "There are negative attitudes among the races. Teachers have low expectations of specific children." When the scores for "Great Extent" and "Moderate Extent" were combined, the item that ranked highest as a barrier was: "There is a low expectation for Native American student performance by many educators" (Question #10).

It may seem too obvious to note, but there is a relationship between students having low self-esteem and a system in which educators have prejudices and low expectations. One person gave a specific example of how this kind of relationship operates: "...One teacher at my school gave my friend a bad grade on her research paper. When I read her research paper, I thought it was excellent and deserved a much better grade than what she got. This teacher favors students who are well known for their sports activities and cheerleading. Just because we Native American students are 'different' does not mean that you should treat us 'differently.'"

Another example was given by a participant who described the most important barrier in their experience as: "...the prejudice and the low expectations of the Native American student. My son, who is in the 7th grade, was ignored by his English teacher when he asked questions about

his homework or papers that were assigned. She simply didn't have the time to talk to him--at lunch, before school, or after school. She just expected him to do the work by reading directions."

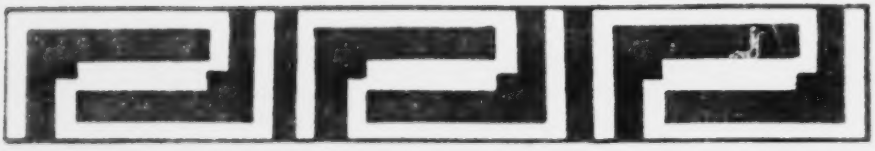
Another person wrote: "When I talk with teachers today (and even during the years I was teaching), I constantly hear that our Native American students are hard to motivate, their interest in school is very low, and they exhibit very low self-esteem. I find the comments to be untrue in most cases."



Erik Mike
First Grade
Nizhoni Elementary

THEME SIX:

Native American Teachers Do Not Have Enough Input Into Educational Matters and There is Not Enough Research on Native American Education



THEME SIX: NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATORS DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH INPUT INTO EDUCATIONAL MATTERS AND MORE RESEARCH IS NEEDED ON NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION.

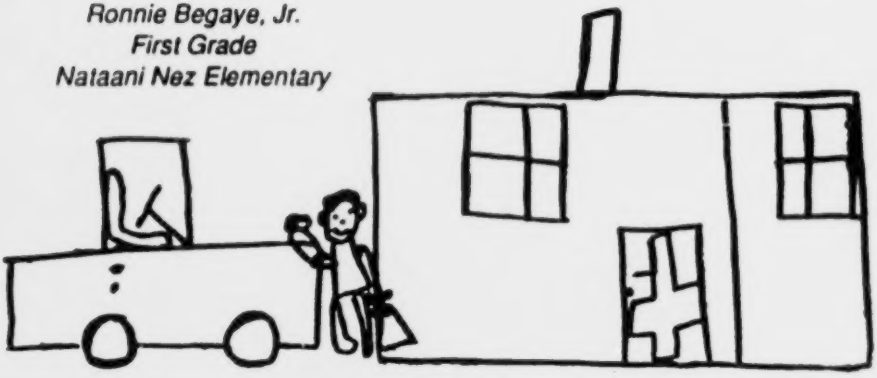
One of the people in the workshop wrote: "All of the items in this survey are important as issues that present barriers to Indian education; but I feel that the number one problem is this--teachers do not have enough information and understanding about Native American cultures, values, lifestyles, etc." This point was made strongly by many of the group.

Another item that was cited frequently as a barrier to the academic success of Native Americans was: "Native American teachers/aides do not have enough input into educational matters" (Question #24). Perhaps, in our efforts to seem "professional," educators have made things more complicated than they need to be. If teachers need more information and understanding about Native American ways of life in order to be effective in the classroom, then a logical source of this information is the Native Americans who work in educational settings.

It would have been interesting if the results of this survey had indicated that teachers needed more information about Native American culture, values, and lifestyles, but that most

people felt that Native American teachers and aides did have sufficient input into educational matters. This would indeed be a discouraging pattern of responses, for it would indicate that the present system did not have the internal resources to reform itself. Perhaps it is the system itself which does not recognize nor value this input in a productive "real" way.

Ronnie Begaye, Jr.
First Grade
Nataani Nez Elementary



The six themes of the study, taken together, constitute an indictment of the present way of conducting education for Native American students in New Mexico; and statewide test scores and demographic data, such as dropout rates, support this indictment.

However, there is hope here; for if the problem is largely one of lack of understanding leading to a mismatch between the skills, abilities, and attitudes that Native American students bring to the classroom and those of teachers from a different culture, then much progress can be expected if we acknowledge this fact and proceed to do the obvious. We must go to Native Americans, especially those who are in the schools, educators and students and have them look at the curriculum and find the conceptual match to the culture itself. We need to ask them questions about how to solve the problems, listen to their answers, and work together in implementing these solutions. This approach calls for a spirit of respect that we know to be the foundation of an effective educational system. This respect must exist between administrators and teachers, teachers and students,, and members of the school community and the community at large. It is also fair to say that the issue of respect is fundamental to addressing the problems of Native American education. This small study tells a story of frustration, but also provides a strategy for addressing that frustration constructively.

THE NEXT STEPS--DOCUMENTING WHAT NATIVE AMERICANS KNOW ABOUT EDUCATION

This booklet serves as an invitation to you, the reader, to become involved in this effort to give voice to educators' views about Native American education in New Mexico. On its part, the Indian Education Unit of the State Department of Education has taken a number of steps to encourage this, including the publication of this booklet; and it stands ready to assist as the next steps are taken. The authors have some suggestions about how you might get involved, using the preliminary findings we have summarized here as a starting point.

We see this as a cooperative effort that can include many different kinds of people interested in Indian education: teachers, aides, administrators, staff, students, parents, community members, tribal leaders, legislators, etc. Just as we brought our own knowledge and background into this task, we invite you to review these findings from your own point of view, and develop a plan of action from there. As we have talked among ourselves about these findings, we have seen some possibilities that we will share with you, in the spirit of cooperation. We are very excited about the pattern of responses to the questionnaire, for a possible path to

solution of the problems of Indian education in New Mexico is suggested here. The data themselves suggest an approach to the next steps: more research is needed, and Native American educators have not had enough power in education. Therefore, the path to follow in the important work of doing more research on Indian education in New Mexico is to get more involvement from Native Americans themselves--educators, tribal leaders, students, parents.

How can this be done? There are many ways, but perhaps a simple beginning will work: ask, listen, watch, and learn. If you are a teacher who works with an Indian aide, ask your aide, "What would you do in this specific incident? Why would you handle it this way? What can you teach me, as an educator who is also a Native American?" Sit back and observe your aide working with Indian children, and notice the differences.

If you are an administrator, ask questions like these of Native American teachers or staff members. This can begin to happen informally, and continue in formal ways, such as appointing Native Americans to administrative advisory groups.

Another approach is to invite several Native Americans to participate in a conversation or seminar in which the major findings

from this booklet are the topic for discussion, and to use each major theme to generate additional ideas and questions. For example, the pattern of responses in this pilot study suggests that a language barrier exists in many school districts: Native American students have difficulty understanding the academic concepts of the curriculum because both the English language and the English concept are foreign and separate from their cultural domain (Question #25). The questions can be asked: "What do you do, as a Native American educator, to give meaning to the concepts taught in English that that affect academic performance? Why do you do it that way? What lessons have you learned about language differences that might be helpful to others? Other topics could be addressed in a similar manner, perhaps following a framework something like that of the bilingual conference workshop described earlier.

A simple approach like this may produce powerful results. After all, most of us who work in education would admit in our heart of hearts that much of what we practice in the schools as professionals is more art than science, and that much of the art has been learned through conversations with people whom we like and respect. It may be helpful to use conversation as one research tool to help build bridges between the majority of

teachers who do not know enough about Native American lifeways and the Native American educators who do not have enough say in educational matters. This will create an opportunity for educators from Anglo, Hispanic, and other backgrounds to gain a greater appreciation of the power of oral tradition, of stories, in Native American life.

European traditions of professional training urge us to trust the written word over the spoken; but it is important to recognize that what can be spoken can be written down, and probably much of what we read between the covers of books started out as conversations among friends.

These are some of our thoughts from looking at our study and data, and we invite you to examine the data yourself. We know that this is a beginning, and a hopeful one. As we address these issues and identify others, we must remain committed; because these problems are too pressing to ignore.

The last words in our survey instrument are an invitation to all of us to continue reflecting on our own experiences and asking other people to help us reflect by sharing theirs. The last words of the survey read, "You may have valuable insight regarding this issue. We welcome your comments."

SURVEY OF TEACHERS RE NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION

Circle the following:

Your Role Position:

Parent Teacher Ancillary Support Staff Administrator Other_____

Your Ethnicity:

Native American
Tribe _____ Black Hispanic Asian Anglo Other_____

-29-

Your Gender: Female Male

Your Age Range: 18-25 26-35 36-50 51+

Years You Have Worked in Education with Native Americans: 0-2 3-8 9-15 15+

Your Years of Education:

Less than High School High School Diploma/GED A.A. B.A./B.S. M.A. Ph.D.

State in Which You Work: _____

* * * *

The following factors have been identified as possible barriers to the academic success of Native American students. Please indicate below the extent to which you feel these barriers exist in your school. We assume that some of these factors may not be present in your school, but please be frank with your responses as this information will be utilized by the State Department of Education and the Northern New Mexico Network for Rural Education. This data will help educators make decisions regarding Indian Education.

1. **The curriculum is not a comprehensive written document.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
8	4	11	1	7

2. **The curriculum is not culturally relevant.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
15	3	8	4	2

3. **The curriculum is not flexible enough.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
6	11	10	2	4

4. **The teaching methods do not match students' skills or abilities.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
9	12	4	6	2

5. **The daily routine and schedules of the school do not match students' learning patterns.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
10	12	5	4	3

6. **There are not enough supplies.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
6	8	11	4	1

7. **There are not enough appropriate materials.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
6	10	9	5	2

8. **The teachers do not have enough information about Native American cultures, values and life styles.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
20	2	3	6	1

9. **Teachers are not well prepared when they enter the field.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
8	14	6	3	2

10. **There is a low expectation for Native American student performance by many educators.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
16	15	1	1	1

11. **There is a low expectation for Native American student performance by parents.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
5	9	11	5	2

12. **There is a low expectation for Native American student performance by students themselves.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
6	16	8	1	0

13. **There is a high absentee rate for Native American students.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
14	11	5	2	1

14. **There is a high incidence of teen pregnancy in Native American students.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
7	10	7	2	6

15. **There is a high drop-out rate among Native American students.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
11	9	6	2	4

16. **There is a high rate of substance abuse among Native American students.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
8	10	9	1	4

17. **There is prejudice/bias against Native American students on the part of some educators.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
13	12	6	1	1

18. **There is prejudice/bias against non-Indians on the part of some Native American students.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
2	13	13	1	2

19. **The pupil/teacher ratio is too high.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
8	11	7	3	3

20. **The Native American student has a negative attitude toward school.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
2	14	8	0	1

21. **Conventional discipline does not work.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
5	13	10	1	2

22. **Parents do not support strong discipline policies.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
6	6	11	4	3

23. **Native American students have health/nutrition problems which affect academic performance.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
5	11	10	3	3

24. **Native American teachers/aides do not have enough input into educational matters.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
14	10	7	1	1

25. **Native American students have language differences that offset academic performance.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
15	6	9	2	0

26. **Native American students have family and home problems which affect academic performance.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
11	13	8	0	1

27. **Native American students have very low self-esteem.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
9	15	6	1	1

28. **Teachers who work with Native Americans frequently suffer from "burn-out."**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
7	9	6	3	9

29. **There is not enough research on Native American education.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
16	8	6	0	3

30. **Native American students are bussed too far.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
11	9	3	5	2

31. **Native American students frequently have to live away from home/family to attend school.**

Great Extent	Moderate Extent	Limited Extent	Not At All	Don't Know
7	10	9	3	3

You may have valuable insight regarding this issue. We welcome your comments.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Survey Instrument developed by Bonnie Page and C. David Beers, 1989.

PARTICIPANTS	Ethnicity	Gender	Age Range	Years Worked with Native Americans	Years in Education	State Where You Worked
Parent	Native American	(1) F	26-35	0-2 (1)		NM
Teacher	(7) Native American (3) Anglo	(9) F (1) M	36-50 (7) 26-35 (3)	0-2 (1) 3-8 (6) 9-15 (2) 15+ (1)	BA (3) MA (5) (Unknown) 2	NM
Ancillary						
Support Staff	(8) Native American (1) Anglo	(6) F (3) M	18-25 (1) 26-35 (4) 36-50 (3)	0-2 (1) 3-8 (1) 9-15 (3) 15+ (1)	High School Diploma (2) AA (4) BA (2)	NM
Administrator	(8) Native American (2) Anglo	(8) F (2) M	36-50 (8) 51+ (2)	3-8 (1) 9-15 (4) 15+ (5)	MA (7) BS (1) Ph.D (2)	NM
Other: High School Student College Professor	(1) Native American (1) Hispanic	(1) F (1) M	18-25 51+	0-2		

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

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Rita Bekise
Marri R. Billie
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Theresa Gachupin
James C. Jones
Alejandro R. Lujan
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Donna Pino-Martinez
Maurice Thompson
Ann Trujillo
Tina Tsosie
Claudette Wolff

(There were a total of 32 respondents; but only those listed above signed their names on the survey instruments. The others chose not to be identified.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

* University of New Mexico Satellite Desegregation Assistance Center - South Central Collaborative

* Project L.E.A.D. - University of New Mexico

* Early Childhood Education Department - San Juan College

* Northern New Mexico Network for Rural Education

* Bennard Dallas (Cover artwork)

* Children's art used through the courtesy of Kaleidoscope, Central Consolidated Schools, Wilfred Billey, Title V Coordinator

* New Mexico State Department of Education - Indian Education Unit

* Darlene Smart-Herrera
Administrative Secretary,
New Mexico State Department of Education - Indian Education Unit
(Booklet layout and calligraphy)

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